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THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB
- Founded 1879 -

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Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

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Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members. See inside back cover.

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Excerpts from Ottawa Field Naturalist TRANSACTIONS

At the Turn of the Century

selected by Sally Armstrong

The years leading up to the turn of the century were very active ones for the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. The following excerpts will reveal some of the industry and enthusiasm of those years. The excerpts are taken from annual reports and presidents' addresses found in the Club's Transactions in the Ottawa Public Library.

1887

Transactions were renamed OTTAWA NATURALIST, portions of which were published monthly, and volume of publication increased. In order to cover the increased cost the President called for new members: "Especially will ladies be welcomed to our ranks, and every effort will be put forth to make the excursions and soirées pleasant as well as instructive. It is much regretted that up to the present time the lady members have, with few exceptions, not taken active part in the work of the Club. There are several branches of natural history, such as Botany, Entomology and Ornithology, which offer to them attractive fields for observation and experiment and in which many ladies are doing most excellent work elsewhere."

1887

Elementary lectures were arranged to form...a consecutive course, while at the same time treating of as many branches as found desirable. They were held every Monday afternoon, commencing January 17th, and ending 14th March. They were adopted especially for those entering upon the study of Natural History ...as follows: Insects Destructive to our Native Trees; Local Geology; Our Introduced Weeds; Geographical Distribution of our Native Trees; How to Identify Minerals; The Forms of Leaves; The Forms of Flowers; and Leaf-eating Insects and Flower Insects.

1887

"Instead of having separate collections... we should have one grand museum that would include every branch of natural history and economic science, archaeology, ethnology and geology; and were the proper representations made to the government, we should see rising in some conspicuous part of our city a building designed for a museum, which would be the crowning glory of the greatest man Canada has yet seen or may see for a century - Sir John A. Macdonald."

1889

...magazine (Club publication) published in quarterly parts not less than 48 pages. Scope of publication has been widened to include papers by members of the Club upon the General Natural History of Canada without being related as heretofore to this locality only.

1891

...now have the use of the rooms in the Normal School (teachers' college) building for lecturing and library purposes.

1892

The International Congress of Geologists has invited the members of this Club to take part in, or send delegates to, the meeting of the Congress.

1898

A $200 grant was received from the Ontario Government to help publish the Naturalist.

1901

Over 80 excursionists spent the afternoon at Hemlock Lake and vicinity.

1901

...meeting for January 22 postponed due to Queen Victoria's death.

1901

The second general excursion was to Cumberland Lake by steamer Victoria, in which over 100 members left Ottawa... returned by steamer Empress after several pleasant hours at the beautiful village of Cumberland. The entomologists were pleased at securing a specimen of the larva of the Large Tortoise-shell Butterfly, Grapta-J-album, which had been sought unsuccessfully for many years.

1902

Prominent lecturers for 3 out of 7 soirees were invited to speak this year. The attendance at all these lectures was good, in some cases reaching 200 or 400.

1907

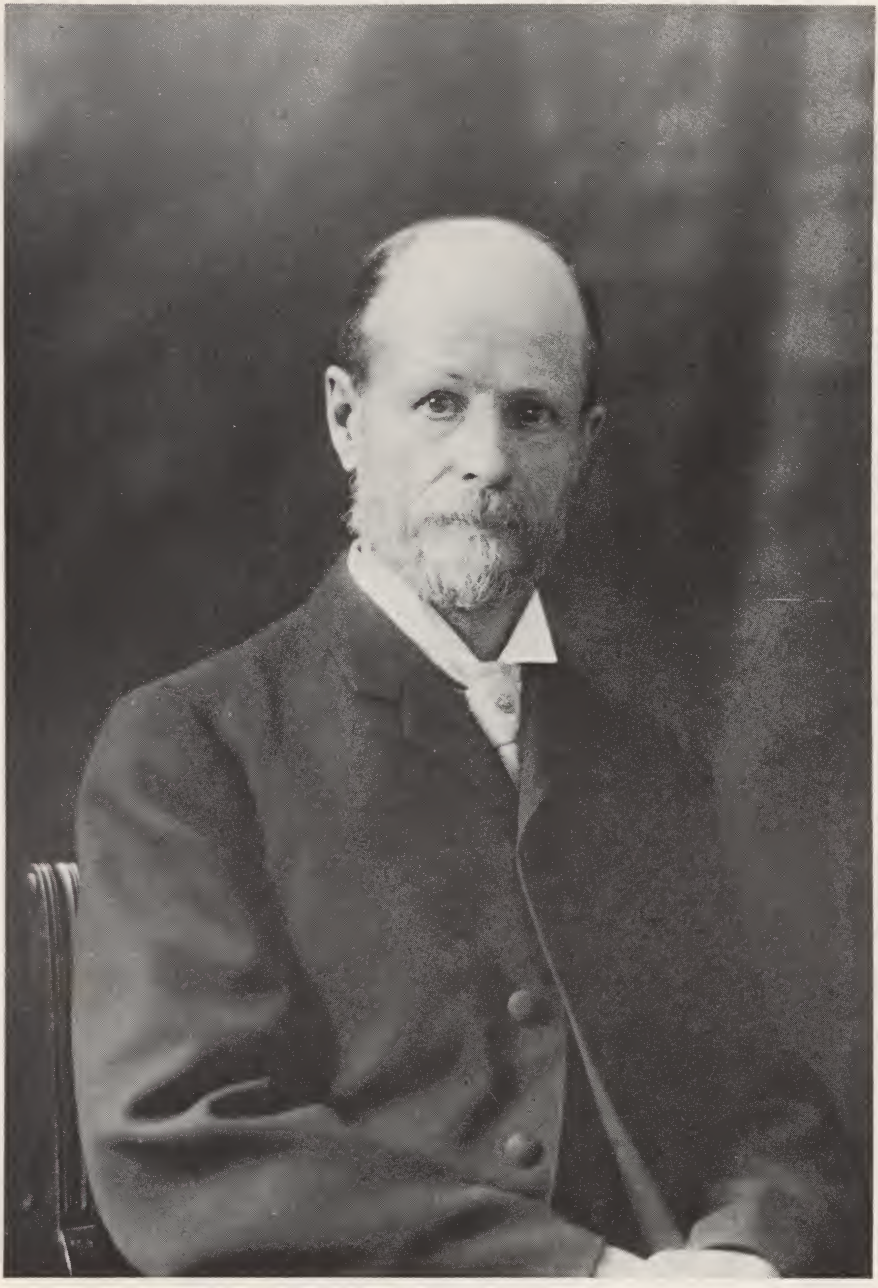
Mr. Ernest Thompson Seton gave an illustrated lecture on 'Animal Minds & Heroes', "delivered with fire of oratory, and enlightened with frequent flashes of the keenest wit. The address was of the best heard in Ottawa for many years."

1910

The planning of an excursion program is becoming more and more difficult from year to year. The rapid expansion of the city and the development of suburban resorts are greatly restricting such valuable collecting grounds as Rockcliffe, Dow's Swamp, Blueberry Point (near Hull) and Britannia.

ROBERT B. WHYTE (1851 ?-1918) OFNC PRESIDENT 1887-1889 ⟶
photographed June 1908
Public Archives Canada (Topley 105521C)

Robert Whyte was one of the charter members of the OFNC and its first Secretary-Treasurer. He was a member of the Council for many years and led many Club outings. His eloquence on these occasions was often noted in the accounts of excursions. It was Robert Whyte who, together with James Fletcher, originated the idea of a field naturalists' club where they "could meet others similarly interested". Robert Whyte had always been interested in natural history, especially in wildflowers. He had an extensive collection of Ottawa flora. Professionally, he was well known throughout the province as a botanist and horticulturalist, and as the originator of the Herbert raspberry.



SPRING BIRDS *1977*

Roger Foxall

The spring migration of 1977 was characterized by relatively few rarities, excellent shorebirding, an incredibly short warbler movement and apparent large declines in the numbers of several species. Once again the Richmond area provided much of the excitement -- Ottawa's first record of Ruff, third record of Sandhill Crane, first spring record of Hudsonian Godwit and the return of the Yellow Rails.

An otherwise normal migration of waterfowl was highlighted on April 23 by Ottawa's second record of White-fronted Goose, found amongst several hundred Canada Geese at Shirley's Bay. The orange bill (instead of pink) showed the bird was of the Greenland race rather than a stray from the Mississippi flyway. Brant were relatively common but a flock of over 200 on May 22 was exceptional.

The hawk migration was disappointing. Sightings of every species were down -- only 10 Rough-legs all season, all three accipiters hard to find and even the locally breeding Red-tails and Kestrels greatly reduced in numbers. Hopefully this dismal picture is either highly localized or, in the case of migrants, the result of birders missing the large movements. To make matters worse, a pair of Red-tails were found shot at a nest near Shirley's Bay. A happier story is of the injured Golden Eagle that was captured on April 9, nursed back to health, banded and released on the 16th.

The good news came on May 19 -- the Yellow Rails had returned to the Richmond Marsh. For those willing to endure two miles of railroad track in pitch darkness, not to mention the bugs, there was the reward of hearing up to 11 birds. For some there was the additional reward of hearing the bugling of a Sandhill Crane; one was heard on May 22 and probably the same bird was heard on the 28th. Maybe this year some brave characters will go in during July or August to check whether the rails and crane stay throughout the breeding season.

The shorebirding was excellent. The season got off to a good start with 3 Pectoral Sandpipers on April 3, beating all previous records by at least a month. This species is normally rare in spring but up to 20 were present at the Richmond lagoons during late April and early May. The lagoons also provided the highlight of the whole season -- Ottawa's first record of Ruff. It was first found on April 24 and obligingly remained until May 8. However, despite the fact that almost all of the city's

birders studied the bird at close range on numerous occasions, there was considerable debate as to whether it was an immature Ruff (i.e. a male) or a Reeve (female). The bird was obviously moulting and the later appearance of several very long feathers around the hind neck suggested it was a first year Ruff. For velvet the lagoons also produced Ottawa's first spring record of Hudsonian Godwit on May 28. Other noteworthy shorebirding events included a flock of 40 Short-billed Dowitchers at Almonte on May 22 and flocks of 40 Ruddy Turnstones and 15 Red Knots at Shirley's Bay on the 28th.

Once again Arctic Terns appeared at Britannia in late May. Up to 30 were feeding over the rapids on May 26 and 27 but only 9 could be found on the 28th.

The season's owling started well with a Boreal Owl on March 6, located on the Jack Pine nature trail just a few yards from where one (the same?) was found in early December. Fortunately it was found early enough in the day for the word to spread and many birders shared the excitement. At least two nests of the rare Long-eared Owl were found. One contained three young at the end of May.

A striking feature of the season was the warbler migration -- the bulk of it lasted just three days! Admittedly there was a reasonable flight of the earlier species around May 6, but they looked very sorry for themselves during the snowstorm of May 8. Cool winds prevailed through to the night of the 15th (a walk on the 14th saw only two warblers) and then they came -- and went. By the 19th it was almost over. For those lucky enough to be out on the 16th and 17th the birding was tremendous -- 21 species of warbler in Britannia woods alone -- but those who were restricted to weekend birding found normally common species difficult to find. The only rare warbler was a male Cerulean singing in Carlington woods on the 21st.

It is often dangerous to draw conclusions about bird populations from the numbers seen on migration, but this year several common species were so rare it seems certain that some suffered very badly as a result of the harsh winter in the eastern U.S. Belted Kingfisher, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Eastern Phoebe, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren and Golden-crowned Kinglet all seem to have been affected. Normally the Golden-crowned Kinglet is one of the most common woodland birds during late April and early May but this year I saw only 4 all season (down from thousands) and only 8 were reported in the whole month of May. Winter Wrens were rare, in line with reports that the Algonquin Park population has all but disappeared. Reports from other areas tell similar stories; the Carolina Wren, always susceptible to harsh winters, has been hit very badly. No doubt these populations will restore themselves over the next few years and, given a mild winter, I hope to provide a more encouraging report next year.

1879 Centennial Report 1979

by Hue MacKenzie

A small but enthusiastic group of members turned out for the June monthly meeting to discuss Centennial projects, and generated a lively, wide-ranging discussion on the objectives and philosophy of the Centennial itself. Your co-ordinating committee was delighted to hear the opinions of non-Council members and to obtain some completely new ideas. The principal viewpoints expressed were:

1 The overall objectives need to be more clearly defined.

2 A Centennial theme should be selected to provide a focus for our activities.

3 A Conference serving as a focal activity was proposed and favourably received. It was agreed that a number of other projects could be scheduled to culminate at the same time (for example an Exhibition timed to coincide with the Conference would be desirable).

4 Centennial activities should be primarily directed towards our members, including those who live outside the Ottawa area.

5 A tree planting project should be undertaken to replace dying elms, etc.

These and other ideas will help the Council and your committee to develop a better Centennial plan.

Project Notes

Gilles Patenaude has agreed to co-ordinate the planning of a Conference. The theme will be announced soon.

The Club Pin project has been undertaken by Trudy Bedford.

Few volunteers have responded to our request for help in the last issue of T&L. We will be asking a number of people to give assistance on projects which the Council approves. If you wish to participate, don't wait -- call us.

(Hue MacKenzie 226-1997; other committee members listed in May issue.)

carnivorous plants

OF THE OTTAWA DISTRICT

David White

Since before the time of Darwin, naturalists have been fascinated by carnivorous or insectivorous plants. In a world where plants are the food source for most animals, those plants which reverse the tables and feed on animals seem an anomaly. By looking at their habitat perhaps we can see what benefits these plants might derive from their carnivorous habit. While the bogs and swamps in which carnivorous plants live may seem rich and fertile, chemical analysis has shown these habitats to be poor in minerals. The high acidity keeps most nutrients locked up in undecayed organic matter. These areas are, however, rich in insect and other invertebrate life (especially biting insects as any bog explorer knows!). By trapping this life a carnivorous plant is able to gain minerals and nutrients which its roots cannot obtain from the poor substrate. It does not appear that these plants trap animals in lieu of carrying on photosynthesis, for they all have green leaves of one form or another.

There are three types of traps used by the ten carnivorous plants of the Ottawa area. Let us look at the various structures which have evolved to enable these plants to gain a balanced diet.

PITCHER PLANT This is the most passive of the traps. The modified leaves form hollow rain-catching vases. Insects are attracted by the red colouration of the leaf and the nectar secreted along the margin of the hood. The inside of this hood is covered with stiff downward-pointing hairs which direct the unsuspecting insect down to a slippery band of waxy cuticle. If the insect falls into the trap, it is usually unable to get up past these barriers and drowns. The victim is then broken down mainly by bacterial action though there is some enzyme secretion. The plant absorbs nutrients from the resulting broth. While insects are the main victims, skeletons of frogs and salamanders have been found in this trap. Not all insects which enter this trap are doomed. A small mosquito (Wyeomia smithii) breeds exclusively in these pitchers. The larvae feed on detritus and organic matter which have collected in the leaves. The larvae spend the winter frozen in the ice within the pitchers.

SUNDEW This trap is somewhat more active. The upper surface of the leaf is covered with two types of glands. Those near the perimeter are long-stalked and have sticky secretions, while those near the centre are short-stalked and secrete mainly digestive enzymes. Insects are attracted to the sticky secretions. On landing, an insect becomes entangled in the sticky glands

Drosera rotundifolia

Drosera intermedia

Sarracenia purpurea

3/4 natural size

which very slowly turn in toward the centre to bring the insect into contact with the digestive glands. In the two local species the leaf then folds in half somewhat to aid the process. Small flies, gnats, damselflies and mosquitoes are the main victims.

BLADDERWORT This is the most active type of trap used by plants in our area. Some of the leaves are modified into small bulbous aquatic traps. They are maintained with a partial vacuum and triggered by sensitive hairs at the mouth. When triggered, the trap opens causing water and prey to be sucked inside. A door then closes to block exit, water is excreted and enzymes secreted into the trap to digest the victim. The trapping operation is very fast (approximately 1/460 second). Although the main victims are crustaceans and small insects, the larger bladders, like those of U. vulgaris, have been known to catch young tadpoles and hatchling fish!

Let us now look at the various species of carniverous plants of the district to see where they grow and how to identify them.

PITCHER PLANT (Sarracenia purpurea L.)

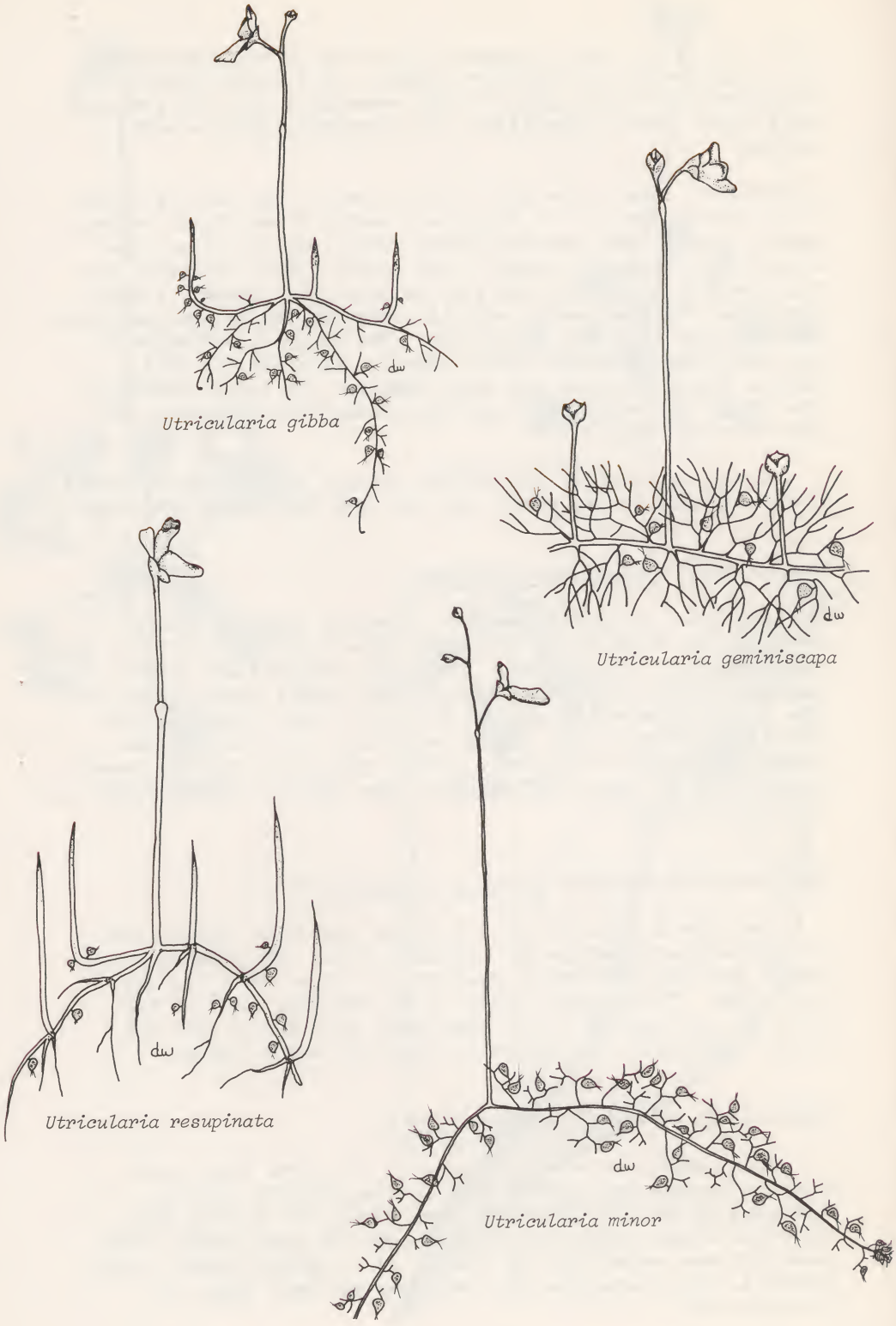
The plant appears essentially stemless with the leaves radiating out from a central caudex. The leaves are 10 to 20 cm long with 10 to 15 per plant. They are evergreen and remain functional until the second season. The single flower opens in June and the seedpod remains on the stalk often until the next spring. The plant grows mainly in sphagnum bogs but is also found in more basic marl fens. In our area it is locally common in most bogs or boggy lake margins. Mer Bleue is a good place to find this plant.

SPATULATE-LEAVED SUNDEW (Drosera intermedia Hayne)

The leaves are oval, have a fairly long thin petiole, and are spirally arranged on the elongated stem. The flowers, which appear late July to August, open one at a time, each lasting only a day. This species grows in the standing water of bog pools and lakeshores. It is known only from Ramsay Lake and nearby Clear Lake, St. Pierre de Wakefield and Mer Bleue.

ROUND-LEAVED SUNDEW (D. rotundifolia L.)

This sundew has a very short stem and round leaves with petioles shorter and thicker than in the previous species. Flowering is as in D. intermedia but during mid to late July. The plant occurs mainly in sphagnum bogs but also occurs along sandy ditches and on old log booms. It is fairly common in the district. Good locations are Mer Bleue and many lakes in Gatineau Park.



1-1/2 times natural size

Bladderworts (Utricularia spp.) There are seven species of bladderworts in this area, and while some seem similar they are actually quite distinctive. Even in the vegetative state the aquatic species are readily identifiable.

HUMPED BLADDERWORT (U. gibba L.)

Our smallest bladderwort. The sparsely leafy stems are 5 mm wide and less than 8 cm long. The few leaves are once to twice divided and the bladders are small (to 1 mm across). Occasionally there are small erect grass-like leaves. The 1 to 3 tiny yellow flowers appear in mid to late August. This bladderwort grows in the wet mud and shallow water of bog pools and lake margins and is known only from Ramsay Lake and nearby Lac Renaud, and Lac Charbonneau.

LESSER BLADDERWORT (U. minor L.)

This aquatic bladderwort is small but larger than U. gibba. The sparsely leafy stems are 10 to 20 cm long or more and 5 to 10 mm wide. The leaves are twice to four times divided and the bladders are 1 mm across. Flowering takes place during July and August with 2 to 6 flowers per stalk. The plant grows in swamps and fens but shuns the acidic water of sphagnum bogs. It is known only from McKay Lake (probably extirpated), Meach Lake, Richmond swamp and the Manion Corners swamp. Since it seldom flowers in this area, it may be more overlooked than rare.

PURPLE BLADDERWORT (U. resupinata B.D. Greene)

Our only purple-flowered species. Like U. cornuta it requires careful uprooting to expose the few stems and small bladders (to 1 mm across). There are usually erect grass-like leaves attached. The solitary flower appears in mid August. The habitat is quite shallow water over mud or sand. The plant is known only from Ramsay Lake, Lac Bernard and Wilsons Corners.

TWIN-SCAPED BLADDERWORT (U. geminiscapa Benj.)

This aquatic is often likened to a small version of U. vulgaris. The stem with leaf plumes is 1 to 2 cm wide while bladders are 2 mm across. It is our only species with cleistogamous flowers (a solitary flower which does not open and hence is a self-pollinated and which is produced underwater on a short stalk). These flowers can be found during most of the summer. Normal flowers appear in mid July with 2 to 4 per stalk. The plant grows in small boggy pools and is known only from Mer Bleue.

HORNED BLADDERWORT (U. cornuta Michx.)

A very attractive plant when in flower but nearly impossible to locate in the vegetative state. During mid to late July the leafless stalk rises from the mud to produce 2 to 4 yellow flowers. With patience and some skill a few filamentous subterranean stems can be found, bearing the occasional small bladder (to 1 mm across). Sometimes a few small grass-like leaves can be found above ground connected to the stems. The plant grows in the wet mud of lakeshores and bog pools. It is known only from Ramsay Lake, Farrelton, and old records from Mer Bleue.

FLAT-LEAVED BLADDERWORT (U. intermedia Hayne)

This aquatic plant is very distinctive. The bladders (2 mm across) are borne on descending stems separated from the rather wide leaves which are on horizontal stems. These leafy stems are 1 to 2 cm wide. Flowering occurs during July and August, each stalk having 2 to 5 flowers. It grows in bog pools and the shallow water of lakeshores and swamps. Although it is rather sparse in the district generally, Mer Bleue and Ramsay Lake are good areas to find this plant.

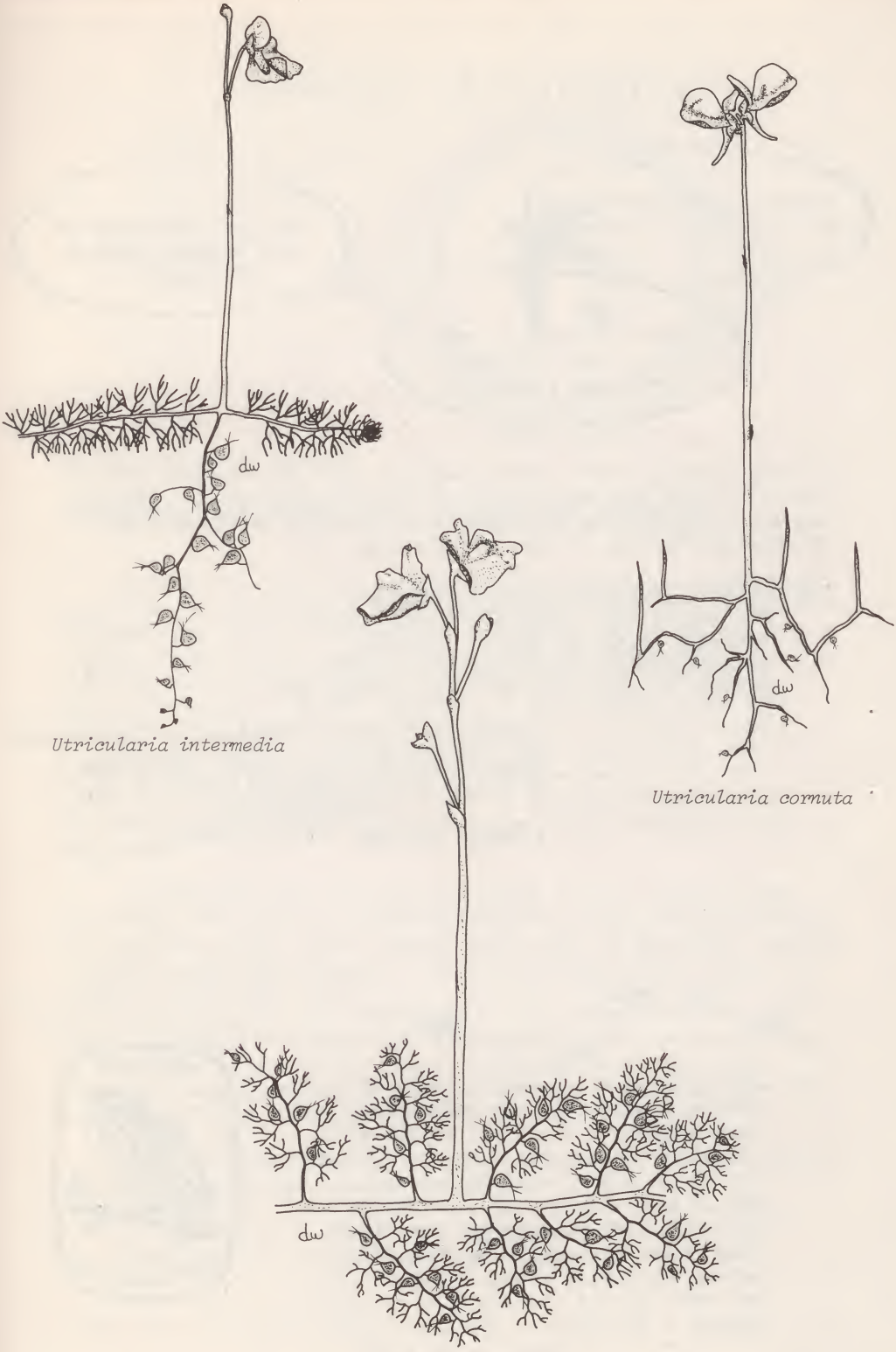
GREATER BLADDERWORT (U. vulgaris L.)

This is our largest bladderwort with the leafy stems 4 to 7 cm wide and bladders 2 to 4 mm across. It is usually copiously supplied with bladders which audibly snap open when the plant is removed from the water and gently skaken. In July the flowering stalk appears, having up to 15 flowers. The plant occurs commonly in swamps, ponds and sluggish streams.

In summary, while the pitcher plant, round-leaved sundew and greater bladderwort are fairly common in the district and can be readily found in suitable habitat, the remaining seven species are quite rare. From looking over the locality information given, it is clear that there are two places to see most of these interesting plants: Ramsay Lake in Gatineau Park and Mer Bleue, both with eight of the ten possible species. While Mer Bleue has long been recognized as a unique habitat with many rare or otherwise interesting plants, Ramsay Lake has not. The flora surrounding this small lake is very rich, and it would be most unfortunate if further development occurred there.

For those who would like to learn more about carnivorous plants, an excellent book has just come out. It is well illustrated with high-quality colour photos and range maps, though the coverage of the bladderworts is rather disappointing.

Schell, D.E. 1977. Carnivorous Plants of the United States and Canada. John F. Blair. Winston-Salem, North Carolina.



Utricularia intermedia

Utricularia cornuta

Utricularia vulgaris

3/4 natural size

NATURALISTS NEEDED !

Do you enjoy visiting Natural science museums?

Are you interested in the Natural History of Canada?

Would you like to work with children visiting a museum?

If your answers to the above questions were affirmative, and if you have spare time during the school year (September - April), you may be interested in becoming a volunteer interpreter for the National Museum of Natural Sciences.

For further information please contact:
Ms. Lesley Sore, Volunteer Coordinator
National Museum of Natural Sciences
Interpretation and Extension Division
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M8 (613) 995-9538

Mme Maryse Lapointe, Voluntaire Coordinatrice
Musée National des Sciences Naturelles
Division de l'interpretation et de la vulgarisation
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CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

SHOREBIRD COLOUR MARKING 1977: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

In 1977, the Canadian Wildlife Service will be continuing an extensive programme of banding and colour-marking shorebirds in James Bay, with the objective of defining migration routes used by shorebirds on their journeys between the Arctic breeding grounds and wintering areas. A highly successful programme in 1976 resulted in over 580 reports of colour-marked birds from amongst 12,400 banded in southern James Bay, in areas ranging from eastern Canada to South America. Much new information is being obtained, and your assistance in looking out for and reporting colour-marked birds would be very much appreciated and would contribute very substantially to the success of the programme.

Feather dyes and coloured leg bands will be used to mark the birds. If you see a marked shorebird, please record details of: species, place, date, colour-marks and, if possible, numbers of other shorebirds present. For colour-dyed birds, please record the colour and area of the bird that was dyed. For colour bands and standard metal leg bands please record which leg the bands were on, the colours involved, and the relative position of the bands if more than one was on a leg (e.g. right leg, blue over metal, etc.). A note should also be made whether the bands were below or above the "knee" of the bird.

Thank you very much for your assistance. All reports will be fully acknowledged and should be sent to:

Dr. R.I.G. Morrison,
Canadian Wildlife Service,
2721 Highway 31,
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1A 0E7

THE MOST COMMON FOREST TREES OF THE OTTAWA AREA

Charles Billington

With all of the interest these days in rare and unusual plants, we should not lose sight of the common, yet very interesting species which make up the bulk of our vegetative landscape. Many of us are familiar with a few of the rarer ferns, orchids or tree species of the Ottawa area, but can you list the fifteen trees that you would most likely encounter on a field trip?

I recently had the opportunity to sample many of the oldest, most mature woodlands throughout the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. These stands included all types from black ash swamps through sugar maple communities to majestic, wind-swept, pine ridge forests. Some of these forest types were sampled more often than others, just as you probably visit certain forests more frequently than others simply because they are more accessible or abundant. During my studies, a minimum of 15 samples (rectangle plots of 15 x 25 m) were taken in each vegetation type within the region, comprising a total of 153 forest records. The most common forest trees and their percent occurrence in the 153 samples are listed below:

Rank	Species	Percent Occurrence
1	red maple	52
2	sugar maple	50
3	white elm	48
4	northern white cedar	46
5	balsam fir	43
6	basswood	40
7	trembling aspen	40
8	white birch	37
9	juneberry (serviceberry)	33
10	black ash	33
11	white spruce	33
12	white pine	32
13	ironwood	31
14	white ash	30
15	balsam poplar	30

This does not imply that these species are the most abundant in the Ottawa area. Even one sapling is sufficient to permit a species to be recorded as present in a sample. The list does give an indication of how widespread or adaptable the species are to different habitats. Most often these common trees occur in some mixture in the forest, with sometimes one, and sometimes another species appearing to be more important in different areas. Rarely do you find a forest composed of only one tree species to the exclusion of all others.

During your fall field trips, relieve your stiff neck by looking up and making a list of the trees you see (noting also the forest type you are in), and compare your own results with the above list. One word of caution - do not expect to see all of the common trees during any one outing. Even the most common species, red maple, is present in only about half of all samples. With a little practise, you will find yourself automatically estimating the kinds of trees you would expect to see growing together in certain habitats. As you become more familiar with the trees and their habitat requirements, this subconscious guesswork can be very satisfying. Mother Nature, on the other hand, does not like to be prejudged and often eliminates certain 'logical' species from apparently suitable sites, or allows an apparently 'illogical' species to occur where no one would have suspected it. This, of course, can add a good deal of head-scratching and interest to your field trips. Tree hunting should be anything but a listless activity.

COMING in our November issue: an illustrated key to winter twigs of some common trees.

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Owls IN CLYDE AVENUE WOODS

Tom Hince

&

Bruce Dilabio

One of the most consistent and convenient areas to observe owls in the winter months, within the city limits, is Clyde Avenue Woods. If travelling by car, go due north from Baseline and Clyde to the end of Clyde Avenue. Ample parking is available along the edges of the road. Proceed directly east from the gap in the chain link fence on the east side of the road until you are in the centre of the cedars.

The woods have been consistently good for observing owls, for several reasons. Firstly, because it is still in a relatively natural state, the food supply is quite high. Secondly, because it is one of the few woods in the area, it is the only good habitat within a large expanse.

A total of seven species of owls has occurred in the woods in recent years (the 70's). The following is a summary of occurrences for each species of owl.

GREAT HORNED OWL This owl has been a regular visitor to the woods throughout the year but more so during the winter months. Usually because of its hunting requirements there is only one individual present.

BARRED OWL During invasion years Barred Owls may be observed here, as in 1973/74 when two birds frequented the area.

SNOWY OWL This owl is not a regular visitor to the woods but has been noted in flight and in the adjacent fields north of Laurentian High School.

LONG-EARED OWL and SAW-WHET OWL During the spring migration these two species have frequented the woods with amazing regularity. Seemingly without fail, they turn up between the dates of April 14th and April 17th. On some occasions both have stayed up to several weeks, on into early May.

SCREECH OWL It has only been recorded once, in the spring of 1971, but probably is of more regular occurrence and should be looked for.

GREAT GRAY OWL The authors found a bird of this species on April 17, 1976 in the centre of the woods. Ironically it occurred during an 85°F heat wave, a total opposite to the below-freezing temperatures in which Ottawa birders usually encounter it.

Although Boreal Owl has never been recorded, probably it has occurred there and it is certainly worth looking for.

We hope that you will find birding Clyde Avenue Woods as rewarding as others have found it in past winters.

SCREECH OWLS By kind permission of the artist, J. Sharkey Thomas

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HOW TO SEE 200 SPECIES OF BIRDS IN THE OTTAWA AREA THIS YEAR

Paul Matthews with Richard Poulin

September - October: This is the fourth of five articles in a series, each covering the same period of time as the issue of Trail & Landscape in which it appears.

In the two preceding articles we warned bird-watchers about the closing-off of Shirleys Bay, and Shirleys Bay remains open. For this article then, we will frequently mention it, but always provide alternative locations.

I'm sure that everyone interested in birds was disappointed with this spring's warbler migration. It is to be hoped that the warblers will visit us for a longer period of time this fall. Unfortunately most of the individuals you see will not be in very colourful plumage. The same places that are good in spring -- Britannia woods, Vincent Massey Park, the Arboretum and the trail opposite the EMR Geomagnetic Laboratories on Anderson Road -- produce well in fall, though Vincent Massey isn't quite as spectacular. If you have time, don't be afraid to look in other spots (local woodlots or parks with trees) as the migration is by no means restricted to the aforementioned locations.

A large number of rarities are possibilities at this time of year. A heavy rainfall will force any migrating Hudsonian Godwits to land. Any species of Jaeger might appear during September or October. Red Phalarope is another bonus bird that is to be hoped for, especially during October.

Another disappointing spring migration was that of Brant. They seemed to pour through in only two days. They should be more common during the fall. You can look for them at the same time as the main flocks of Canada Geese are going through the area. A good place is Ottawa Beach (the edge of the river along Highway 17 near the Acres Rd. -- no large groups please since it is private property and birdwatchers are just tolerated there.) Go early in the morning to see them flying over. In the flocks of Canada Geese, look for Snow Geese.

Before continuing further, let us again mention the best shorebird sport in the Ottawa area. They are: Shirleys Bay, Ottawa Beach, Watt's Creek (from Highway 17, turn south rather than north on the road leading to Shirleys Bay), Thurso, Almonte, Munster and Richmond sewage lagoons, and along the Ottawa River at Wychwood on the Quebec side.

From early September onward, Redhead (206) should be relatively easy to find along the Ottawa River from Britannia to Shirleys Bay. Britannia pier and Ottawa Beach are two of the most likely places. During the first two weeks of the month, Ruddy Turnstone (207) should be at one or more of the following: Ottawa Beach, Nepean Bay (east of Parkdale and just west of the Chaudière Bridge), and east of Aylmer on the Quebec side. White-Rumped Sandpiper (208) tend to be rather erratic and are to be watched for at all shorebird sport throughout the two months we are concerned with. Dunlin (209) will be common at most of the above places during much of the period. Ottawa Beach is a good location for Sanderling (210) from early September to early October. Bonaparte's Gull (211) should be fairly easy to find at Shirleys Bay and near the Britannia rapids.

Three bonus birds to be on the watch for in September are Bald Eagle (generally before the 20th), Red Knot (in late August and early September) at virtually all the shorebird places (check the newspapers to see which spot, if any, seems to be producing them), and Caspian Tern, throughout September (Ottawa Beach and Shirleys Bay are the most likely locations).

This spring was a good one for Orange-crowned Warbler (212) but for those who missed them, they should be still more plentiful in the fall from about the 10th to 25th of September, though harder to identify. They are generally found in low thickets and willows. Watch for the yellow undertail coverts. Any Dowitcher seen after September 15th should be checked very carefully as it could easily be a Long-billed Dowitcher. The best way to identify it is to flush it and hope it calls (having learned which sounds they make beforehand). Gray-cheeked Thrush (213) are here in small numbers from September 20th for approximately a two week period. Britannia and Clyde Ave. woods (north of Carlington ski hill) are good spots. By far the best place and time for Water Pipit (214) is Shirleys Bay dyke in late September, but if it's closed, many ploughed fields can produce them. It's a great help to know their call. They are around for much of the period, but peak in numbers towards the end of September.

Canvasbacks (215) arrive somewhat later than Redheads (end of September), but can be found in the same locations. Watch for Horned Grebes and Red-necked Grebes. They should be in the same general area. Good places for Ruddy Duck (216), Oldsquaw (217), White-winged Scoter (218), Surf Scoter (219), Black Scoter (220) and Red-breasted Merganser (221) are Shirleys Bay, Ottawa Beach, and Lac Deschênes on the Quebec side. Ruddy Ducks are usually here in October, Oldsquaw and the Scoters in October and November, and Red-breasted Merganser from October through to December.

If a cold front is moving down from James Bay into the area during the period from October 20th to November 10th, it is well worth a trip out to Harwood Plains for possible Golden Eagle. After mid-October, there should be a few Iceland and Great Black-backed Gulls at Nepean dump (please note that Ottawa dump is closed), but perhaps you should wait until November when all the uncommon large gulls arrive.

Be sure to be on the lookout for rarities throughout September and October, and please report any you find to Rick Poulin at 825-1251. Rick can also give you more information on the various places mentioned in this article.

EARLY FALL PROGRAM

arranged by the Excursions and Lectures Committee
Roger Taylor (731-9270) Chairman

Times given for outings are departure times; leaders must start promptly. Arrive early to avoid being left behind!

BIRDS IN FALL MIGRATION

Sunday	28 August	Leader:	Roger Foxall	(745-7791)
Saturday	3 September	Leader:	Jo Ann Murray	(226-1997)
Sunday	18 September	Leader:	Bruce Barrett	(836-5927)
Saturday	24 September	Leader:	Monty Brigham	(777-1675)
Saturday	1 October	Leader:	Brian Morin	(234-8753)
Saturday	9 October	Leader:	Steve O'Donnell	(737-5270)

Meet: Britannia Drive-In Theatre
Time: 7:00 a.m.

Tuesday 13 September

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Speaker: Dr. V. Solman
Meet: Activity Centre, National Museum of Man, Metcalfe & MacLeod
Time: 8:00 p.m.

Sunday 2 October

FALL MUSHROOMS

Leader: Gilles Patenaude (741-6886)
Meet: Supreme Court, Wellington Street
Time: 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday
5 October

LEADERS' WORKSHOP

Organizer: Jo Ann Murray (226-1997)
Meet: Activity Centre, National Museum of Man, Metcalfe and MacLeod
Time: 8:00 p.m.

This will be a relaxed, informal discussion -- a pooling of ideas, experiences, and techniques for leading walks. Among the participants will be Isobel Bayly, George McGee, Brian Morin, Mickey Narraway, Gilles Patenaude, Joyce and Allan Reddoch. All outing leaders and assistants, past, present and prospective are cordially invited.

Tuesday
11 October

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Speaker: George L. Christie
Meet: Activity Centre, National Museum of Man, Metcalfe and MacLeod
Time: 8:00 p.m.

T&L contributors: please make sure that material for the November issue is in the Editor's hands by September 15.

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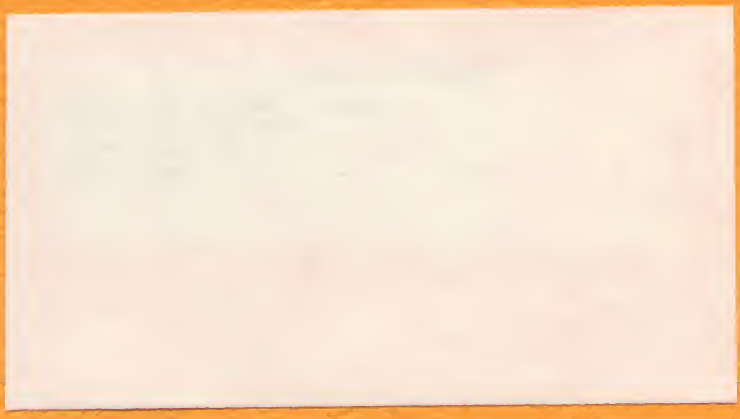

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